

TV/Media Support
Support for Media from Other NYSCA Programs

TV/Media

Until now, the association between art and television has been mostly manifest in television programs about the arts. Usually such programs have appeared as features of public television. In 1970- 71 the Council provided for substantial increase in this type of programming through grants to the public TV stations of the New York Network. It also provided significant support in connection with a less familiar phenomenon—the accelerating interest of artists in the creative use of the medium itself.

Television as art, or what has come to be called video art, has developed over the past fifteen years in three distinct strands. Artists with electronic skills have transformed old TV sets into the dazzling "light machines" that have appeared in galleries and museums, and some have developed video colorizers and synthesizers which permit electronic "painting." A relative few have penetrated the engineers' citadels of broadcast television to create experimental videotapes with the full palette of the switching consoles. A larger number, working since 1967 with half-inch portable video systems from Japan, have explored the potential of videotape to reach out and open circuits of communication within a variety of small communities — giving substance to attitudes and concerns which monolithic broadcast television has ignored to a point of near obliteration. The following listing in this new area of Council involvement suggests the extraordinary potential of the medium still to be explored as we go forward into tomorrow's wired nation.

--Russell Connor

TV/Media assistance in 1970-71

American Crafts Council, New York City. \$36,380 for organizing a Contemporary Cultural Information Center—a videotape exhibition facility operated by People's Video Theatre.

American Foundation on Automation and Employment, New York City. \$48,000 for administrative salaries of the Intermedia Institute and the presentation of a series of eleven concerts at Automation House by multimedia artists and composers exploring new uses of electronic technology in music.

The Block of 7th Street Media Project, New York City. \$25,000 for the continuation and expansion of a media workshop, a design workshop, and photo lab and gallery projects with youth from the Lower East Side.

Center for Understanding Media, New York City. \$35,000 for the compilation and maintenance of a videotape archive by the Raindance Corporation, and for the publication costs of three issues of a video newsletter, Radical Software.

Cornell University, Collaborations in Art, Science and Technology, Ithaca. \$25,000 to support the collaboration of creative and performing artists, technologists, and scientists by sponsoring seminars, lectures, and workshops in the Finger Lakes Region, and for a multimedia poetry tour of up state New York.

Dance Channel-Visual Services (subsequently called Video Exchange), New York City. \$10,400 for the production of videotapes that can improve on dance notation by providing a choreographic

record for study and analysis and can be used for multimedia presentations.

Educational Broadcasting Corporation {WNET, Channel 13}, New York City. \$60,000 to develop the Artist's Television Workshop and enable five artists to experiment with videotape for broadcast on Channel 13; \$7,500 for production of up to one hundred poetry "station breaks" consisting of children reading their own poetry; \$54,000 for an equipment pool of one-inch color and half-inch black and white video equipment for artist-community use; and \$15,000 for the National Educational Television production of the Paper Bag Players' Dandelion for the 180-station public television network.

The Educational Television Council of Central New York {WCNY, Channel 24}, Syracuse. \$10,000 for videotaping and broadcasting composer Eric Salzman's environmental multimedia work Feedback.

Global Village, New York City. \$35,000 for the operation of community-oriented video workshops and to make portable television equipment available to interested artists for experimental purposes.

Long Island Educational Television Council (WLIW, Channel 21), Garden City. \$21,000 for the production of thirteen half-hour programs on the cultural contributions of different ethnic groups in Long Island, and to continue the Community Calendar program of local events.

Mohawk-Hudson Council on Educational Television (WMHT, Channel 17), Schenectady. \$79,100 for operation of a mobile unit for cultural programming, and for a half-year residency at the station by Aldo Tambellini.

Port Washington Public Library. \$31,000 for a community program promoting the arts, humanities, and social awareness through use of film and other media, particularly portable videotape systems.

Regents Television Fund, Albany. \$13,000 for the production of a thirteen-part school television series, Film and Society, exploring such American film types as the Western, the Musical, and the Gangster Film.

Rochester Area Educational Television Association (WXXI, Channel 21), Rochester. \$16,000 for the production of a one-hour color presentation of the Brockport Dance Ensemble performances and (in cooperation with the Rochester Museum and Science Center) four half-hour black and white specials.

Rochester Museum and Science Center. \$73,500 to create, in conjunction with Videofreex, a Media Bus to serve museums, schools, and community organizations, and to establish an equipment pool of portable video equipment for artist-community use.

South Street Seaport Museum, New York City. \$36,500 for live presentations at the Seaport Theatre, and for long-range development costs of a sound and light production.

Southern Tier Educational Television Association (WSKC, Channel 46), Binghamton. \$18,950 to produce local cultural programming from WSKG-TV; and \$50,000 for the establishment of a Community Center for Television Production under the administration of Ralph Hocking, director of the Experimental Television Center at State University of New York at Binghamton

Supernova, New York City. \$32,000 for the operation of workshops in photography, silk-screen, printing, mythology-poetry, video, sound, film, and children's art.

Unit Productions Unlimited, Garden City. \$3,000 for production costs of six studio interviews and discussions with artists from Long Island for broadcast on WLIW.

Video Arts Research, New York City. \$35,000 for the production of videotapes by Jackie Cassen and other media artists for distribution through universities and cable television. Western New York Educational Television Association (WNED, Channel 12), Buffalo. \$65,000 for the production of a half-hour color program on New York State artist Charles Burchfield, and for taping a series of music concerts presented by associates of the Center of Creative and Performing Arts at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

Other NYSCA Programs which Supported Film and Video

[The listings under each program area are selected from the NYSCA final report. We have not included projects where it was not clear that media was integrated into the project, or where media was used solely as an informational or documentary technique or a transmission medium for another art form. Some of the descriptions have been excerpted, indicated by brackets; activities which were not media-related may be omitted.]

Dance

“Dance, justly termed America’s most significant cultural export, goes to all parts of the world. All but a small portion originates in New York, which, it should be noted, has been called the Dance Capital of the World... This situation raised a basic question when the prospect of significantly enlarged State support for dance became a reality in 1970-71 – whether support should be concentrated on the most stable and successful organizations or spread as widely as possible. The pattern that emerged was that of major support for major organizations, with smaller groups being given careful consideration. The latter received assistance which was significant for them and their programs, although the dollar amount was relatively small. Of the 89 grants to dance groups, the 5 largest represented 46 percent of the total in amounts of \$100,000 or more, and the 12 largest (\$50,000 or more) represented 66 percent of the total dance allocation. At the low end of the scale, 38 groups received 6 percent of the total in sums of \$900 to \$5,000.” [excerpted]

- Stuart Hodes.

Dance Films Association, New York City. \$1,000 for preparation of a catalog of dance films. *Eclectic Arts*, Williamsville. \$1,000 for production costs of one multimedia dance performance and workshop.

The House, New York City. \$9,000 for administration and production costs of Meredith Monk’s multimedia dance center.

The Elaine Summers Experimental Intermedia Foundation, New York City. \$10,000 for administrative activities and artists’ salaries, equipment maintenance, and rental of performing space and equipment for a series of multimedia presentations.

Theater

ZONE, Brookline, Mass. \$8000 matching funds for workshops in multimedia techniques in cooperation with the State University Office of University-Wide Services at SUNY Colleges at Geneseo, Oneonta, and Potsdam; the SUNY Agricultural and Technical College at Cobleskill; SUNY Community Colleges at Corning, Fulton-Montgomery, Jamestown, and Kingsborough; and the State University Center at Albany.

Special Programs

Special Programs represents an effort by the Council to increase its relevance to the black and Puerto Rican communities. Where before the Council could have been regarded as a means of introducing the concerns of the arts community to government, its role in this program can be seen as informing government of the concerns of the community at large as expressed through the arts.

Old boundaries are made invalid by this change. It no longer makes sense to organize a program in terms of traditional art disciplines like visual, literary, and performing arts. In shedding these limitations, the program has constantly had to confront the basic questions of what art is and who it should be for. It has served the Council as the means of exploring the conflict between excellence and equity as it crosses the terrain from "class" art to "mass" art. The main thrust of Special Programs is related to ghetto arts, and, in fact, this section of Council activity was originally called the Ghetto Arts Program. Since its inception in 1967, the program has offered black and Puerto Rican artists the opportunity to practice and exhibit their art and experience the training and experimentation necessary for its growth. At the same time, the program has sponsored efforts to develop the cultural resources of ghetto communities and encouraged activities that relate art to everyday ghetto life.

When the program came into existence, most community-oriented activities were considered under the heading of recreation. The consideration of such activity as serious involvement in the arts, which was necessary for Council assistance, had the immediate effect of establishing professional criteria for appraisal and the ultimate effect of improving quality. But the cultural dynamism of ghetto communities which the program revealed has called for new definitions of art. The success of the program has also laid the foundation for reaching the hundreds of thousands of people in hospitals, prisons, Indian reservations, and migrant worker camps — and, indeed, the huge rural population that makes up an important but often unseen part of New York State.

A recurrent problem of the program has been how to respond sensitively to the new dynamic forces within isolated communities and to identify emerging cultural leadership. Toward this end the program has within the past year supported twenty-one new groups in amounts of \$5,000 and under. In addition, it has awarded smaller sums for research or development in connection with such projects as a photography and graphic arts magazine reflecting the aspirations of the black community (James Belfon); the discovery and arranging for publication of unpublished black poetry of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Steve Cannon); the use of new musical composition techniques in teacher training (Bill Dixon); the graphic design and video photography of the Summer's End Festival in Central Park (Frances Elfenbein and Henry Casey); an East Harlem arts information journal (Hope Community); a catalog of an exhibition of the work of fifteen leading black artists shown at the Studio Museum in Harlem (Weusi Nyamba Ya Sonna Gallery); and a multimedia astrological festival in New York City's Union Square (Marilyn Wood).

-- Donald Harper

The Block of 7th Street Media Project, New York City. \$1,500 for operating costs of a summer workshop program in filmmaking, photography, graphics and video for Lower East Side youngsters.

The Children's Art Carnival, New York City. \$20,000 for staff salaries. The Carnival, which is supported by The Museum of Modern Art, The Ford Foundation, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, provides free instruction in painting, sculpture, construction, figure drawing, and filmmaking to approximately 10,200 children from

the Harlem community each year.

Children's Art Workshop of Cooper Union, New York City. \$15,000 for after-school and weekend workshops for Lower East Side elementary and high school students in sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, film, printing and lithography, electronic music, video, creative cookery, and crafts. Weekly enrollment averaged two hundred.

The Community Film Workshop Council, New York City. \$30,000 for instructor's fees, equipment rentals, and administrative costs to establish film workshops in low-income communities in Rochester and New York City. This organization, which offers intensive instruction by professionals, also attempts to find employment for workshop participants.

Cultural Council Foundation, New York City. \$25,000 for a two-day Summer's End Festival to enable the artists of black, Puerto Rican, and other somewhat culturally isolated communities to "show their wares" to New York City at large. Performances in drama, music, dance and film at Central Park Mall were attended by over 3,000 people. The performing groups were the Afro-American Studio for Acting and Speech, The Alliance of Latin Arts, Arts for Living, Council on Inter-racial Books for Children, Flash & The Dynamics, Jazzmobile, New York Theatre of the Americas, Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, Soul and Latin Theater, Theatre for the Forgotten, The Voice of the Children, and Voices, Inc. An additional \$20,000 was used to place artists in neighborhood storefronts and community center arts workshops.

Benedict Fernandez Photo Film Workshop, New York City. \$15,000 for instructor's fees. The three-year old workshop, which is based at the Public Theater, provides comprehensive training in both still and sequential photography for over two hundred New York City youngsters.

Freedom Arts Workshop, Newburgh. \$415 for a Newburgh State Fair art exhibit in which videotape and other visual materials were used to create a dialogue between cities with common problems.

Hamilton Hill "Drop9In" Arts and Crafts Center, Schenectady. \$13,075 for salaries of director-ceramist Margaret Cunningham and film workshop director Michael Dunn. The Center provides art training for members of the black community.

Henry Street Settlement, New York City. \$67,500 for workshops and performances. The Arts for Living Program, under the direction of Woodie King and Rod Rodgers, offers multiracial Lower East Side residents free instruction in film, photography, theatre and dance, and presents regularly scheduled professional theatre performances.

Museum, A Project of Living Artists, New York City. \$4,600 for a workshop in live sketching; film showings, dance recitals, and poetry readings; and free exhibit facilities for artist groups concerned with relating the arts to society.

Native American Cultural Awareness Organization, Buffalo. \$5,440 for producing a two-week North American Indian festival of songs, dances, films, lectures and authentic Indian food at the State University of New York at Buffalo. The Festival, which was planned by Indian students at the University, was attended by 39,000 people.

Operation Discovery, Brooklyn. \$19,000 for a video survey of cultural activities in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area to train young people in all aspects of television production. This project, under the direction of Doris Marshall, was the first phase of a program to develop Bedford-Stuyvesant community television production.

Two Bridges Neighborhood Council, New York City. \$1,250 for professional fees and materials used to develop new models of community involvement through motion picture photography, painting and architecture.

White Plains Community Action Program. \$13,000 for administration and operation of a storefront art studio which provides workshop space for children and teen-agers interested in painting, sculpture and filmmaking.

Visual Arts Program

In recent years the visual arts have been subject to constantly changing definition as they come to encompass new territories of expression. In much the same way, the Council's Visual Arts Program has never been the same from year to year — projects and concepts have shifted frequently, and the thrust has changed to reflect current needs.

The program is now organized under the headings of Museum Aid, Community Projects in the Visual Arts, Exhibitions, and Visiting Artists. Community Projects is new this year — established in response to a significant increase in requests for Council assistance from community art organizations. These requests, many of them from newly-formed groups working on untested ground, required new criteria for evaluation, and the new program section was set up to develop them.

Within the well-established Museum Aid section, the program has responded to the expressed need for cooperative ventures among museums, historical societies, and arts organizations. Increased financial pressure and a common desire to serve new audiences have led many previously self-sufficient institutions to think in terms of related needs and complementary services. Two Council-initiated surveys of museum educational services conducted by Priscilla Dunhill and Suzanne Slesin demonstrated the need for cooperative educational programming. A grant to the Cultural Council Foundation to initiate the Museums Collaborative in New York City has already demonstrated that cooperative ventures can work effectively, especially with educational efforts.

The Visual Arts Program has continued to conduct some independent activity and research, especially in connection with the development of new services. Such program activities in 1970-71 included photographic research on street musicians by Richard Bellak and on environmental change in the Walkill River valley by Burt Shavitz; exhibit workshops for teachers, students, and librarians conducted by Daniel Newman; and an exhibit portfolio. Life on the Hudson in the Days of the Sloops, prepared by the Council staff for the Hudson River Sloop Restoration. For the first Earth Day celebration in New York City, the Council served as coordinator of the State's displays in Union Square and produced the first edition of Arthur Tress's Open Space in the Inner City.

Elsewhere, the Visual Arts Program has sought to bring about inter-agency and inter-community exchange through the establishment of a loose network of statewide arts organizations and educational institutions working to develop related services. Council assistance to The Farmers' Museum in Cooperstown for regional media workshops, Bank Street at Harlem for its multimedia center, the American Heritage and World Cultures Social Studies Centers in Manlius for a media program, and the Rochester Museum and Science Center for its media exhibition workshop has resulted in exchange of ideas, procedures, and personnel.

The Visual Arts Program considers each project or activity on an individual basis, and tries to have a staff member visit each organization that applies for assistance. As a result of this practice, the staff has become familiar with the personnel and general programs of all organizations which have received Council help in the visual arts — making it possible for them to serve as catalysts for many of the imaginative projects being developed by organizations throughout the State.

-- Allon Schoener

Albany Institute of History and Art. \$79,700 for installation of Albany history displays; conservation of paintings, manuscripts, books and prints; student projects concerning the study of historic districts and the preservation of historic sites in Albany, Troy and Cohoes and the production of a film on the use and condition of the Mohawk River in the Capital District; salary of a consultant in regional services; staff supplementation with a business administrator, a curator and a public relations officer.

The Farmers' Museum, Cooperstown. \$21,975 for the production of a film about The New York Farmer Today by Joseph Consentino.

The Finch College Museum of Art, New York City. \$32,695 for preparation of a traveling film exhibition *Artists at Work*; transportation of a hologram exhibition *N Dimensional Space* to Rochester and Schenectady; research for a second hologram exhibition; staff supplementation with an administrative-curatorial assistant in the museum's contemporary wing; aid for an intern in the contemporary wing (fourth year).

The Hudson River Museum, Yonkers. \$140,200 for [excerpted] filmmaking workshop for inner-city teen-agers; film on Putnam County made by John Cohen.

The Museum of Modern Art, New York City. \$280,000 for curatorial operations and services; aid for interns in film and photography (fourth year), an intern in the department of architecture and design (third year), interns in the publication and print departments, and an intern to work jointly for the department of prints and in traveling exhibitions.

Rochester Museum and Science Center. \$128,900 for a [excerpted] cultural extension program; planning a hall of communications; organization of a study and exhibit center for environmental problems and an audio-visual workshop

The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York City. \$89,900 for an artist in residence program; an exhibition series for emerging black artists; print-making and film workshops; membership and publications programs.

Visual Arts Program - Community Projects in the Visual Arts

"Community Projects became a new component of the Visual Arts Program in the spring of 1970 when the enlarged legislative appropriation for the fiscal year enabled the Council to respond to a wider range of applications for assistance in visual arts activities than it had been able to accommodate in the past.

Community Projects has been able to help organizations at many different stages of development. It has become clear over the past year that many groups applying for help, despite newness of lack of institutional stature, serve as "alternative arts organizations" in relation to museums and historical societies. They may differ from traditional arts institutions in terms of size, structure and atmosphere, but these differences need not diminish – and may actually enhance – their importance in the total cultural complex. In contrast with conventional priorities, the new groups are likely to stress community involvement and development of the individual's visual awareness through workshops for teachers and students. Artists involved in these organizations are usually skillful at working with members of the community so that their projects become bona fide group efforts. In some cases, this is a matter of an artist putting his own art second to community activities." [excerpted] – Trudie Grace

Kirkland Art Center, Clinton. \$26,000 for salaries of a director and a secretary, an exhibition program and expansion of classes in ceramics and film, and a film *100 Mile Radius*, by Phill Niblock – on the area which surrounds Clinton.

Westchester Council of Social Agencies, White Plains. \$7,000 for a slide-tape-film production, *Westchester – Our Threatened Wonderland*, presented to the seventeenth annual Westchester Conference of Community Services in November 1970, and for making it available to interested organizations throughout the State.

Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art, Ithaca. \$15,132 for videotaping parts of the Critic's Choice program for 1970-71 by the Cornell University Library Video Center and for preparing a display unit for the videotape. [see also Visual Arts Program – Visiting Artists.]

Visual Arts Program – Exhibitions

Projected Art. Films by pioneer filmmakers; organized by Finch College Museum of Art. Exhibited in Armonk, Hoosick, Jamestown, Keuka Park, Niagara Falls, Port Washington, Southampton, Tarrytown, Troy, Westbury.

Visual Arts Program - Visiting Artists

“The Visual Arts Program sponsors two separate activities which involve artists in direct relationships with their audiences. The first of these – Critic's Choice – moves student groups from upstate college campuses to New York City artists' studios, with an exhibition of the artists' work at campus galleries following the initial student experience. A related program brings artists and critics to campuses and community centers. Both programs were developed to provide a bridge between the creative environment and the teaching situation.... An exhibition of the participating artists' works selected by Lucy Lippard and Max Kozloff circulated during the school year to Cornell University, State University of New York campuses at Albany and Binghamton, and State University Colleges at Oneonta and Plattsburgh. At a few of the campuses the exhibition was accompanied by a videotape of the first group of studio visits and one of the symposia. The tape was produced by the Library Video Center of Cornell University under a grant to the Andrew Dickson White Museum.” [excerpted] Trudie Grace

Technical Assistance

“Technical Assistance continues to serve as an expression of a basic Council intention – to provide advisory help by making expert consultants available to requesting organizations rather than subsidize and, in effect, shape the cultural efforts of regional groups.” [excerpted] – Rudolph Nashan

Albany

Albany Jewish Community Center – professional participation in film discussion.

Brooklyn

Operation Discovery - study of closed circuit TV operation

Ithaca

Cornell University – videotaping Critic's Choice studio visits and symposium

New York City

Creative Society – development of contemporary theatre, photography and film workshops

Young Filmmakers Foundation – advice on fundraising; preparing an application for assistance

Port Washington

Port Washington Public Library – development of a film program including a filmmaking workshop

Rochester

Rochester Museum and Science Center – programming and advice on multimedia plans for planetarium

Information Services

This newly created division of the Council recognizes the need of the Council staff, the arts organizations of the State and the general public for information on the arts – particularly the arts in New York State and the Council's relationship to them. The department gathers, organizes and disseminates such information, taking advantage of the vast number of facts and figures about the arts in New York State which the Council has been able to amass from applications for assistance. As the Council's arm for making the public aware of the State's participation in local arts programs, it responds to requests for assistance with the publicity and promotion programs of local organizations. The department is also responsible for the Council's publications, operation of its new Information Center, and administration of the New York State Awards.

– Ellen Thurston

Publications available from the Council's New York City office. [selected]

The Film and Speaking About the Film